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Extension Service - United States Department of Agriculture

WARTIME EXTENSION WORK

A SUMMARY OF EXTENSION WORK, TECHNIQUES, AND RESULTS BASED ON STATE REPORTS

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Prominent in this week's summary are reports on crop and livestock production, home food supply, progress in organization of cooperatives, negro extension activities, and clothing conservation.

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KANSAS

October 13, 1943

Home food supply. - In all counties agents are urging food conservation through preservation of fall garden products. A number of canning centers are still in operation. Some counties are salvaging used food jars to add to supply of containers. Food demonstrations are being continued; also window displays to improve food selection for proper diet.

Pork production. - Because of labor shortage more farmers than usual are fattening hogs by hogging-down process. Practice most commonly used is to fence off strip of field and allow hogs to do thorough job of getting all grain before fencing off another part of field for them to harvest. Small pigs will pick up scattered kernels of grain left on ground by larger hogs. Electric fence is efficient aid in this practice. If vegetation has made much growth, at least two furrows may have to be plowed to keep charged wire from becoming grounded and ineffective.

Farm management. - Plans for maintaining production of war crops in 1944 are being made with county agents and farmers. Fieldmen of farm-management associations worked with 550 farmers, helping them with individual problems of production; planning cattle, hog, and sheep programs for canning season; urging marketing of hogs at weights of 200 to 250 pounds and during present period of seasonal market strength.

By radio talks and other means, specialists have emphasized need for farmers to make adjustments in methods of livestock production and management for wartime programs, such as (1) changing feeding plans to save grain, (2) building up necessary feed reserves, (3) raising more of their own protein, (4) planting more legumes and temporary pastures, (5) feeding less grain to cattle, (6) marketing hogs at lighter weights, (7) maintaining maximum dairy and egg production through increased production per unit.

SUMMARY NO. 74

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Plans have been made with all county agents for farm-management projects in 1944, including records of livestock production, distribution of account books, and economic information to guide farmers in their marketing programs. Expansion of farm-management association work into at least 14 new counties in 1944 will provide special assistance to 800 farmers in achieving maximum war food production.

Need for buying bonds as reserves for replacement of buildings and equipment after the war, reducing debts, and greater production of family's food on the farm has been recommended in meetings and otherwise. Information on income-tax act of 1943 as it applies to farmers was prepared and distributed to all counties.

Field crops. - Field days emphasizing wheat seedbed preparation and use of superior varieties as assurance against failure were held in six western Kansas counties just before wheat harvest.

Attempt will be made to increase acreage of waxy club kafir. This variety has been found suitable substitute for cassava root in manufacture of tapioca and certain essential adhesives. Cassava cannot now be imported. Series of field meetings and tours, attended by 292 farmers, was held to demonstrate best varieties of soybeans and method of seeding. Meetings have been held for discussion of importance of saving as much roughage feed as possible and methods of harvesting, curing, and preserving feeds, especially soybeans and legume hays, to prevent waste.

Clothing conservation. - In series of "old clothes clinics," women in several counties are giving special attention to use of clothing materials on hand in relation to their needs and to current styles. Many useful articles have been brought out of storage to be made over into attractive garments for family wear. Among them are men's overcoats, which are particularly usable, since overcoat style is practical for women this year. Men's suits are made into coats and suits for children and girls. Atchison County women, in special tailoring group, are finishing 17 coats and suits as valuable additions to winter wardrobes. These garments range from make-overs for children and adults to fine-quality woolens being made into overcoats and suits for adults.

TEXAS
October 1, 1943

Farm labor. - In attempt to relieve Texas rice growers threatened with loss of much of their bumper crop on account of acute shortage of harvest hands, Extension put on advertising program with 60 weekly and 14 daily newspapers. Through September an estimated 10 truckloads of workers had been recruited in east and northeast Texas counties and moved to rice-growing areas. Cost of transportation and meals en route was paid by Government. Further relief was furnished by transfer of war prisoners to temporary camps in region. So far, 250 have been placed in Wharton County and another group in Fort Bend County. Among most troublesome farm labor spots at present are Rolling Plains and High Plains areas where cotton picking and pulling are at peak. County agents report need for 25,000 pickers in Low Plains and about 14,000 in High Plains. Heretofore these regions have depended largely upon migratory workers for harvesting, but this year number has been smaller than usual. In most counties in these areas, prevailing rate for cotton pulling ranges from \$1.25 to \$1.50 a hundred, and picking brings a little more.

Crop production. - Despite lowering of estimated yields of cotton, food, and feed crops because of drought and heat, totals of principal feed crops still too good year of 1942. Combined yield of these crops, including corn, grain sorghum, oats, and barley, is estimated at 162,830,000 bushels, as compared to 154,264,000 bushels, produced last year. Production of rice was increased by 5,096,000 bushels, sweetpotatoes by 2,475,000; and white potatoes by 1,151,000, over 1942. Total peanut yield is estimated as practically same as in 1942, although acreage was 162,000 greater.

Cotton improvement. - Much of cotton crop has been harvested. Southern half of state is practically through and rest, except for South Plains, is well advanced. Extended dry, hot weather shortened length of lint and reduced yield, but grade is better than in previous seasons because acreage planted to approved varieties was increased substantially. Plans are being made for larger planting of good quality varieties in 1944. Much good seed has been reserved for next year.

Hog production. - Future hog production in Texas faces these conditions: (1) Available grain feed slightly less than 1943; (2) available protein supplement feed outlook as critical as in 1943; (3) prices of both grain feed and protein supplements higher in 1944 than this year; (4) further expansion of hog numbers limited by available feed supply; (5) hog prices constant, with possibility of higher trend. With this outlook there will be no need to expand hog numbers as in 1942 and 1943. Extension program must be designed to translate available grain feed into largest possible poundage of pork. Extraordinary effort is required to reduce losses and inefficiencies in production which come with high-pressure methods of increasing hog numbers. Following points are being emphasized for increasing efficiency in production: Save high percentage of pigs at farrowing time by employing good equipment and intelligent management; prevent deficiency diseases by correcting feeding, especially by larger use of green grazing; keep sows of good breeding and breed only purebred boars; cull poor-producing sows; kill unthrifty and diseased pigs; and produce two litters yearly from each sow.

Feeds. - Campaign to persuade farmers, especially those who have livestock, to plant small-grain pastures this fall has been pushed aggressively by extension dairymen. Through press releases, radio broadcasts, and detailed information given to county agents, emphasis was placed on value of these pastures as means of relieving drain upon concentrated protein feeds. Small-grain pastures will analyze 15 to 20 percent protein at proper stage for grazing.

Home food supply. - Emphasis is being given to use of food conserved at home - canned, frozen, dried, and brined. Extension specialist in food preparation compiled and made available to county home demonstration agents mimeographed recipes on serving canned vegetables and preparing dehydrated vegetables. Exhaustive study of food wastes conducted by three extension food specialists resulted in specific recommendations of ways to reduce appalling yearly losses from faulty management, handling, and preparation of foods.

Farm management. - Prices of goods and services, taxes, and war bonds were discussed in detail by extension economist in farm management at series of bidistrict meetings in September. Plans are being made for series of round-table conferences to teach county extension agents mechanics of filling out tax returns under new law. About 60,000 copies of new income-tax leaflet have been distributed to Texas farmers.

Goats and mohair.—Mohair grades, as established through extension mohair-grading program begun in 1939, receive further recognition each season. USDA market news letter carries current prices of grades. Contracting of mohair on a graded basis demonstrates confidence trade has in Texas set-up for grading. Regardless of labor shortage, enough help is expected to be available to grade another million pounds this fall. Consistently, better clips have brought growers more money than similar mohair brought on original bag basis. Grading program has opened broad field for work in flock improvement. Buyers are showing more interest in quality when making selections of breeding animals. 4-H Club program involving selection and development of billie kids has been started. Kids are to be selected this fall and exhibited in February and July 1944, the latter show to involve a sale.

Cooperatives.—Savings from feed-buying pools this year were so substantial that Texas farmers are inquiring about extending their buying arrangement into other fields. In at least six counties groups took definite steps during September toward organizing consumers' cooperatives. New businesses established will facilitate production by enabling farmers to save money and time to render services that did not exist before. Extension has furnished much information to groups interested in establishing freezer-locker plants. Generally, information was sought on how to obtain priorities, whether plant should be cooperatively or privately owned, and kind of records or accounts to be kept. Bottleneck is not priorities but dearth of equipment. Specialist in cooperatives recently met with farmer groups interested in cooperative health organizations. He predicts "plenty of cooperative hospitals after the war."

Wildlife.—Production of domestic rabbits for meat has become major activity of 4-H Club boys and adults, especially among urban and suburban residents. As result, many thousand pounds of meat will be produced to supplement rationed meats. Rabbit growers' associations are being organized and hold shows and exhibits sponsored by breeders and 4-H Clubs. The 1944 outlook for breeding stock is more promising. Many breeders are making special prices to members of 4-H Clubs, and some associations are sponsoring junior clubs.

At fall meetings of community game-management associations, landowners set harvesting quotas of game birds and animals for their lands. Shortage of ammunition will curtail hunting somewhat, but thousands of deer will be taken from fine crop soon to be ready. Cold-storage facilities and better knowledge of curing venison will reduce waste of meat common in past years. Thousands of stocker fish are being placed in farm ponds by State and Federal hatcheries in cooperation with county agricultural agents. As result, 100,000 Texas farm ponds will contribute to war food production with more pounds of fish. Treatment of ponds for control of vegetation, and their fertilization to increase food for fish are major activities in extension farm-pond program.

Girls' 4-H Clubs.—More than 56,000 Texas 4-H Club girls have grown gardens, chickens, sheep, calves, pigs, turkeys, fruit and field crops in effort to "feed and clothe a fighter" to extent of their ability. They have taken over home work to release labor for fields or to make labor more effective. Many qualified as regular field and range hands and did work formerly done only by men. They have shown skill and good spirit in "making things do" or making them over, especially

in clothing work and home improvement. In Liberty County, 72 4-H girls averaged raising more than 40 chickens each, more than 1/4 acre of garden, canning nearly 200 quarts and drying about 20 pounds of fruits and vegetables apiece. These girls averaged helping one person each with garden information, two with canning, and one with poultry. Requests were made for more than 6,000 copies of award of honor given by local people to 4-H Club girls for excellence in wartime production. This represented about 1 out of every 8 4-H girls in State.

Home demonstration clubs.—Home demonstration agents report many home demonstration club women who taught school before marriage are returning to schoolroom. Others drive school busses or help to prepare school lunches. Many have contributed food and equipment for school lunchrooms. Seasonal activity is cleaning of school-houses and grounds to put them in proper condition for year's school work. Six of the 12 home demonstration clubs in Young County contributed \$25 to equip soldiers' kits, and \$21 for other war purposes. They also contributed 8,144 pounds of scrap metal, 249 pounds of tin cans, and 125 pounds of waste fats.

Concentrated work on making feather comforts occupied home demonstration club women in many counties in September. Activity served double purpose of making use of old feather beds which often are storage problem, and providing light, warm bed covering.

Negro activities.—Reports from negro county agricultural agents show that 66 farm leaders were trained to make sirup by improved methods. In 8 counties 26 method demonstrations in sorghum sirup making and 2,831 gallons made. Sirup making in Hopkins County has been major demonstration. Total of 1,200 gallons has been made on Sam Dial farm by use of power mill, for profit of \$1,020.

Assistance was given 308 negro farmers and 4-H Club boys in 18 counties in vaccinating 1,121 head of hogs and treating them for internal and external parasites. People in these counties are endeavoring to produce enough pork and pork products to supply home needs and surplus for armed forces. In Gregg County 14 4-H Club boys are producing big-boned type of Poland China hogs. Each boy has pasture for grazing, well-planned hog house, and self-feeder. Boys helped to construct pens, pastures, houses, and feeders. They are taught by demonstrations the best methods of producing and handling hogs for quickest profit.

Negro county agents report that 4,893 persons from small towns and rural areas have registered and gone to work harvesting cotton, peanuts, corn, rice, hay, and sweetpotatoes in 25 counties. Key farm leaders were selected in each community and neighborhood to get all available help. James Graves of McLennan County stands out as No. 1 crew leader, handling 200 to 350 laborers. Leaders report to offices of county agents when their groups finish picking at one place, and they are then sent to other farms. In this way more workers are obtained and they do more effective work. Negro farm laborers are all willing to do their utmost in war program.

